

# **INFERTILITY AND ADOPTION**

**A Story of Divine Order**



**April Dawn Bridges**

**Infertility**

**&**

**Adoption**

**A Story Of Divine Order**

**April Dawn Bridges**

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*“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls...”* (Jeremiah 6:16)

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## **DEDICATION**

I would like to thank God for his love and mercy, for without this I would not be writing the words that fill these pages.

This book is dedicated to our two beautiful sons, Michael and Brett, without whom we would not have a story to tell. We love you both very much and thank God for you every day.

We extend a special thanks to our family and friends who have traveled this journey with us, giving their undying support. We also want to give particular thanks to our dear friends Corbett, Evelyn, Katrina, and also to our dear friend Wendy Lee. I could not have put this all together without you. I am so blessed to have had your love and support through this journey. May God bless you.

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SAMPLE PAGES

# **PREFACE**

## **The Road of Infertility**

The road of infertility is truly a hard road to travel. This book will not tell you how to conceive, nor will it inform you of any magic pills or potions. It will inspire you never to give up hope, for God does have a plan for our life, and this is “*Divine Order.*”

## **Our Story**

As you read this, you will walk through our story of infertility and just where that road took us. We are just one family, out of many, who have cried the tears and felt the pain of not being able to conceive. But, “*With God all things are possible.*” (Matt.19:26) Through the telling of our story, we hope to remind you that you are not alone.

## **Our Account is Written to Our Boys**

Our adoption stories are written to our boys with great love for them. Through reading their stories, you will find the love of God and how his plan for our lives became “*Divine Order.*”

SAMPLE PAGES

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SAMPLE PAGES

# CHAPTER 1

## THE ROAD

*“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” (1 Corinthians 2:9)*

### **A Little Girl’s Dream**

When you were a little girl, as you played with your dolls, you pretended to be “Mommy” to all of them. If you were lucky, you would talk Johnny, who lived next door, into coming over and being the “Daddy;” that is, once you talked him out of his sandbox full of toys. If you were like me, as a little girl you always dreamed of getting married, having a house with a white picket fence, 2.1 kids, a cat and a dog. In other words, you dreamed of having a normal, happy life. For most little girls, that dream becomes a reality, but for others that dream will never be fulfilled.

### **My Childhood**

As for me, having grown up in a solid

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Christian home with a wonderful Mom and Dad, and a house full of brothers and sisters (six of us), I never thought for one minute that the idea of having children would only be a dream for me. I never even considered the possibility. I guess I just assumed I would have everything I dreamed of as a little girl.

### **Life's 'Ups and Downs'**

Life does sometimes throw us curve balls, but just because they are curve balls doesn't mean that they are wrong or right..... only different. Sometimes the way we look at things in life isn't the same way God looks at things **for** our lives. Our time isn't always God's time. Patience is a virtue that we as humans struggle with.

*"Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." James 1:3*

### **An Example**

It's like getting up in the morning and running around, trying to get out the door as you run late for work, and everything is going wrong that could go wrong. You rush to get in your car, spill coffee on your shirt, then run back in and grab another one from the closet. It's not perfect but it will do. You get almost to work and the traffic has stopped completely and you are forced to take a detour from your normal route. Frustrated at

the events of the morning, you pray for God's grace to get you through this day in one piece so that you may live to see tomorrow. Getting from point A to point B is not always a straight line.

## **God's Detours and Plans**

Sometimes it takes that detour or curve ball to get us to what eventually we find to be the most beautiful place in our life. God's detours are his way of slowing us down and redirecting us to his greater plan...His "*Divine Order*." We can't always see what's ahead. Did you ever think that the coffee on your shirt or the traffic being stopped wasn't part of God's *Divine Order*? Maybe it was to keep you from being in the crash that was just ahead of you, or maybe it was to get you to slow down and take in your surroundings. God has a plan for all our lives; we just have to put ourselves aside and open ourselves to what God has in store for our lives. Believe me, I know that this is easier said than done. I've been there. But at least give it a shot... you may be surprised at what you find.

*"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5-6*



## **A Little Walk Through Life**

Ok, now let's go for a little walk.

You are all grown up now, no more playing with dolls and pretending. You are now a woman. I know that sometimes we all wish we could go back and be a little girl again, but guess what...we can't. If we did go back, we would have to do it all over again, all the heartache and pain, tears, silliness, adolescence, acne, boys and oh, so much more. Nope, I do not want to go back; so I will continue to move forward and continue to grow.

### **“Mister Right”**

One day, you meet your “Mister Right,” and you know that he is the **ONE**. As your relationship grows, you discuss marriage and children and decide that is what you both want. That's what I did. I married my “Mister Right.” I married the love of my life; William. We both wanted children from the start but decided to wait at least a year so that we could settle down, save some money, and get into the whole married routine... whatever that means. Marriage does not come with an instruction book. It is a day by day learning curve and walk in faith.

## **A Miscarriage**

For us, we had no problem getting pregnant once, but it ended in a miscarriage when I was about six to eight weeks along. We were devastated, heartbroken and in pain. Our faith was strong in that we knew God had a reason for this loss, but it still hurt. We would try again.

## **Failed Attempts at Getting Pregnant**

Well into our second year of marriage we were still trying. Months passed and we knew in our hearts that something wasn't right. Why was it so hard to conceive again? Disappointment after disappointment time and time again... which really meant negative pregnancy test after negative pregnancy test. The frustration began to build and we decided it was time to go to the doctor for help. This is where all the medical testing and procedures began. It felt as if I were just one big number and aggravation in the medical world. The doctors, who were supposed to have all the answers, would just say to me "just give it a little more time, don't stress over it, it will happen, you're still so young," and the most famous words of all, "**you're trying too hard.**" I hated those words with a passion.

## **The Frustrations**

Sensing our frustrations, the doctors would draw blood each visit, just to make us happy, and then to make them happy they'd send me the bill. Does that sound familiar? I felt like I had given them enough blood to fill another human being! Then the test comes back....and oh, the results. You want the results to be normal, but at the same time you wish they could find something that needed to be fixed. Well, my blood work always came back normal, normal, normal! I was ever-so-tired of hearing that word "normal!" I needed and wanted an answer as to why we were not conceiving a child, not just be told "everything is normal." Every time the doctor would say, "just keep trying" as he handed me a calendar and told me to keep track of my cycles. He also told me to buy a BBT (Basal Body Temperature) thermometer to tell me when I was ovulating so that we could schedule "marital relations."

Unexpectedly, something that was once thought of as a beautiful experience between husband and wife becomes work, work, work! Boy, did I come to hate that with a passion! At first it was fun and your man is very happy with this new arrangement, but after two, three, or perhaps four months, what once was passion in your marriage becomes a chore that no one is happy about....scheduled marital relations. Something about that just

isn't right, much less normal! Everything (and I do mean everything) is scheduled with a calendar and set by the watch that is laying beside your BBT chart. I hated it! This is not how it should be, so why Lord are you putting me through this?

Years three, four and five of our marriage came with new doctors, more tests and more procedures. The doctors thought if I had an HSG (Hysterosalpingogram), that would find the answer to all our prayers. Nope... all was clear with my tubes and no blockages were found. I was still asking, "why Lord?" What is in your bigger plan for William and me? I knew in my heart that God's timing was not for me, nor science, to question, and when it was right our prayers would be answered.

As for my dear sweet husband, oh, what this man was willing to go through. "Want a cup?" seemed to be the usual question. Well, he really didn't want one, but he was a real trooper and took it anyway. The SA (Semen Analysis) test showed a low sperm count and some malformations. The doctors told us that conception would be hard to achieve but not impossible, if we would "just keep trying." That small glimmer of hope, that there was finally an answer to our situation, vanished when sadness and disappointment walked right out of those doctors' doors with us every single time. As we left our

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appointments, and our hope for a family was crushed each and every time, sadness boiled out of my eyes and my heart. How much more beaten down could I/we get? William was my rock; always great, always supportive. He would look at me and say, "Honey, it will be okay. It will work out." He always carried a different outlook than I. It seemed as if he had a true sense of what God's plan would be for us, and that it would all be okay. I guess I couldn't see it at that moment.

*"Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." Psalms 24:8*

*When you feel like dying, you should talk about living.*

*When you feel like giving up, you should talk about pressing forward.*

*When you don't see any way out, you should talk about how God can make a way.*

*And know this; the enemy always fights you the hardest when he knows God has something great in store.*

*Author Unknown*

## CHAPTER 2

### THE ANGER

*“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?”*

*O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.*

*But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*

*Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted and thou didst deliver them.*

*They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. Psalm 22: 1-5*

#### **A Dark and Lonely Place**

I just wanted to die. What did all this mean? What were we supposed to do now? I prayed and he prayed, every day crying out to God for a child of our own. We had done everything humanly possible: blood work, procedures, infertility drugs and still no baby. I found myself in a place I never would

want anyone to be. This place was dark and lonely and I felt so abandoned by God.

### **I Was Angry With God**

I was so angry with God. How could He do this to me? How could He do this to us? We were good people. We both loved God and were strong in our faith. We went to church, had a good solid marriage, nice home and were financially able to provide for a child....so, why God? Why? I couldn't understand. I cried myself to sleep night after night, month after month. I know that my dear husband was feeling like he had let me down as he saw my heart ache day after day. I never felt let down by William. I felt God had let us down.

### **My Heart Versus My Mind**

My husband carried his anger well. I cried aloud. Sometimes I couldn't understand my faith, because even though I was so angry with God, I still prayed and still attended church. I still somehow, somehow, knew that God must have something in mind for me. I just didn't understand what His will for me was. I carried the passage:

*"And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible." Mark 10:27*

and read it daily. In my heart I truly believed this, but my mind was not so agreeable. If God truly loved me then why did He want me to have such heartache?

## **Lots of Anger, Shame, and Fear**

I had anger and lots of it, along with shame and even fear. I had it stuck in my head that it was wrong and a sin to be angry at God, and that brought me to shame. Through those trying years I discovered that I was human; flesh and bone, and God is still all-knowing. I was and always will be a child of God. He is my friend through good times and bad.

## **Anger With My Best Friend**

What would you do if you were angry, hurt, and confused with your best friend? Nine out of ten times you would go to your best friend and tell them that you were angry with them and you didn't like to feel that way toward them. You would have to talk it out, make amends and forgive.

## **My Best Friend**

Well, I had come to that point in all my anger, that I had to do just that. I had to go to my best friend, get on my knees, and talk it over. I had to go to God, my best friend. I



talked to God face-to-face, just as I would have talked to my earthly best friend. I cried and prayed. After I prayed and talked to God for a little while, I felt some peace. I say some peace, because I still had to heal, as we all do, after we have been hurt, broken and bruised.

### **Deep Spiritual Understanding**

As the days passed, I still longed for a baby. I still hurt, but somehow I knew that God has to have a plan for my life; our life. Even though we had no idea what lay before us, we still had to keep the faith that God had an awesome plan that one day would be revealed to us when the time was right. “All things in God’s time.”

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **A PART OF THE PLAN**

#### **Foster Parenting**

In 1995, we were introduced to the idea of foster parenting. We decided that maybe, just maybe, this was what God's plan was for us. So we became foster parents for two children. This was truly a challenge. We were young, dumb and totally unprepared for what lay ahead of us.

#### **Learning What True Love Is**

Even though I came from a large family and thought I knew how to be a parent, I was clueless of how to be a "mom" to a 9-year-old little boy and a 3-year-old little girl. But I would certainly try to be the "mom figure" they needed. Here were two beautiful children entrusted to us, both with a lot of baggage, and I felt so helpless and like a failure. I was not prepared to understand nor handle what was facing me.

We had these two beautiful children in our lives for 15 very hard months. The "system" pushed and pushed for us to adopt

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them. We came very close to doing so, however struggling in our hearts to make the right decision for everyone involved. One night, after the children were asleep, I found myself lying in bed sobbing and crying aloud. I knew this situation was not right. This was not God's plan for us. I felt as if I were losing my mind! I was in a very dark place. At that moment, I knew what I had to do; what William and I had to do together. These two beautiful and precious children needed more than what we could give them. They needed someone who was older and wiser, who could give them what we could not. Oh dear God, please guide us; these children are depending on us.

*"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philipians 4:13*

That night, William and I prayed with all our hearts and souls. We came to the decision that if we truly loved these children, we had to let them go. This was one of the most difficult and painful times in our lives that we had ever faced. Once again we were left with empty hearts and empty rooms. I questioned myself many times, wondering if we had done the right thing by letting the children go and stopping foster parenting altogether.

## **Leaving My Broken Heart at Jesus' Feet**

I know in my heart that it was the right thing for all, but the pain was unbearable at times. I felt as if I had abandoned those children and abandoned my faith in God. I was mentally, physically and spiritually drained. I feared that my failure as a “foster mom” was God’s way of saying that He would not fill our hearts and home with children ever again. I was breaking from the inside, and not just in my heart, and I felt I needed to pray and ask for forgiveness because I had failed. I fell on my knees and prayed out to God one more time, “God, please help me. I need you God. I feel, but I don’t know what I feel. God, if you ever see fit to give me a child, I promise to not make the same mistakes that I have made in the past. I promise to give a child everything I have mentally, physically, spiritually and financially. God, I promise to give this child back to you. I will love this child with all my being until the day I die. God, if you see fit to bless us, I promise everything that I am and everything that you want me to be.” I left my prayer and my broken heart at Jesus’ feet that night.

The children left in November, 1996.

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*“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6*

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **A NEW DAY**

*“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1*

#### **Mother’s Day, May 11, 1997**

Wow! Where do I even begin to tell this part of the story? We were providentially told of a pregnant woman that chose life and wanted to give her baby up for adoption. Little did we know that her decision would eventually come to be our first-born child. We had no idea at this point how the events would unfold or even if this were actually part of God’s plan for us. I had been praying for, and asking for, peace, from my best friend, God. God heard my cries and truly was giving William and me a clear sign of peace and forgiveness. But this journey was only beginning....

“It is past experiences and pain that make us whom we are today, and it is past pain that makes us the parents we are now.”

## **A True Hero**

It was the Monday after Mother's Day, May 12, 1997, that I spoke to a true hero; a woman that chose the life course for her unborn child. She was 5 months pregnant and wanted to give the baby up for adoption so that he or she could have more in life than she could offer. We spoke for the longest time, as if we had always known each other. Her words were kind and sincere. I could not wait to meet her face-to-face.

## **Astonishment**

I told William about my conversation with this woman. He told me that this was the craziest, most hare-brained idea I had ever had and that no one in her right mind would just give her baby away. I told him I knew that it sounded crazy, but I really had a good feeling about this. I'm sure by this point, this wonderful man I married thought that I had lost my mind completely.

*"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Romans 15:13*

## **Thursday, May 15, 1997**

It seemed like the longest day in the